



The Bay-wing Quarterly

Newsletter of the Arizona Falconers Association

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Edited by Anne and Paul Schnell

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A Message from the President

Charlie Kaiser

Hi everyone. Happy holidays to all!

Our election results are in and I'd like to welcome our new board:

Charlie Kaiser – President, Jamaica Smith – Vice President, Ron Palmer – Treasurer, Anne Schnell – Secretary, Pam Hessey – Director, Jeremy Hough – Director, Troy Moody – Director, Joseph Pravongviengkham (also known as Joseph P) – Director, Paul Schnell – Director, Harold Smith – Director, Brian Wood – Director.

I am REALLY excited to see all the new names on this board! It has been a long time since anyone has stepped up to join the ranks of AFA leadership. Without new blood, an organization stagnates. Your participation will be crucial to the continued success of AFA as a viable organization. I have met and talked to all of you in the past and I truly believe that each one of you is well-suited to this board.

I would also like to give a big THANK YOU! to our outgoing directors, Matt Hankins and Kristy McDonald. Both Matt and Kristy will continue to be involved in club operations, so you have not heard the last from them!

The January 2019 AFA Desert Hawking Classic is coming to **Tucson January 24th to 27th**. We

will be at the Radisson Suites Tucson at 6555 E Speedway Blvd, Tucson, AZ 85710. Details on room booking and registration will be published soon. Block out your dates now!

We are working hard on improving your meet experience so expect some changes once you get there. Game scouting so far has been encouraging, with bunnies, jacks, and Antelope Jacks available in the area. Don't miss out on our first Southern AZ meet in a while! And bring your swimsuits... the hotel has a heated pool and Jacuzzi!

Recently, AZGFD has been working on trueing up their records as they prepare for the rebirth of the FWS online database. Many of you have probably gotten emails or phone calls from your falconry coordinator requesting copies of some missing paperwork. We all know their paper records are incomplete and inaccurate; if they ask you for help, please work with them to get your records in order. Very soon we will publish an article on how to take care of some basic stuff with AZGFD, including checking your records, getting your renewals, resolving issues, etc. Stay tuned...

I hope you all are having fun hawking. I've been watching Facebook and enjoying the adventures of Nate, Amber, Jamaica, Lauren, Brian, and Carissa (among others) who repped AZ at the NAFA meet in Lubbock. Great work, folks! Bring your stories to the Classic!

See you all there...



Welcome New AFA Members!

Ben Williams

Kalen Pearson

Elliot Williams



The Medical Corner

Tools for Trouble

By: Daniel Scrivener

I hope everyone is having a great season so far. My goshawks are finally enjoying the cooler weather, though they did have to wait until the middle of November, but so far, they have been taking a decent number of cottontails and the Finnish (725g) has caught 1 jackrabbit. Granted the jackrabbit popped

up at my foot, tripped over a rock, broke his leg and snapped his neck, but hey he still caught it. Seriously though it was a short flight, and I was able to get to him quickly to help. Scared the crap out of me thinking he might get hurt. This brings me to the topic of discussion.

We all have worried about something happening to our birds and not having the proper gear on hand to help with any injuries. Many injuries in the field are traumatic, and us being able to assess the situation and stabilize your bird in the field can be as simple as using some minor tools. This will be a shorter topic than most, but I think it is important for all of us to understand what we can do to help.

Foot injuries:

Foot injuries can be benign or can carry on and become something that could make your bird lose a toe or entire foot. Birds do everything with their feet and are a necessary tool for them to survive or be good hunters. Punctures are usually benign as long as they are not on the plantar surface of the foot (the part that comes in contact with perches). Surface punctures should be cleaned, and a simple antibiotic ointment can be placed on them. The sooner it is cleaned the less likely an infection can take hold. You can use a simple diluted betadine or chlorhexidine solution, in a 1:10 ratio. Pad the area dry and add a small amount of a triple antibiotic ointment to it. DO NOT use ointment with a lidocaine additive. If the injury is on the plantar surface, it is important to watch for any bumble foot (pododermatitis) signs. If the infection takes hold, it can progress into something detrimental. Many of you have dealt with bumblefoot occasionally and have your own ways to treat it, and that is fine, however, if you are uncomfortable treating it yourself, please find an AVIAN veterinarian to evaluate the foot.

Talon breaks happen, and they can pull off entirely. This looks worse than it is most of the time. Usually some cauterization sticks or qwikstop will work well. If you do not have any of these, a mixture of flour and cornstarch can be used.

Leg injuries:

Most of the time leg injuries are due to improper leash lengths when perching. Harris' Hawks are infamous for fracturing their tibiotarsis. Tibiotarsal fractures are typically a simple fracture with no splintering of the bone. Clean breaks are usually simple to align and place in a bandage, however, this is an advanced and should not be done on your own or without at least a radiograph to see how severe the break is. Some falconers with a lot of experience have handled these cases without taking to a vet, however, if you do not that this experience, do not attempt it as you can cause further injury. Clots can be introduced into the blood stream, and reperfusion injuries can cause death in your birds (this

can happen at the vet as well). For more advanced fractures that have splintering, surgery is typically the only route to go for repair. Bone splinters can cause a lot of pain if they are not realigned appropriately, and when a callus forms, there may be strength deficits present and can affect hunting later. Wrapping a leg lightly to prevent movement will help stabilize the leg until other steps can be taken. Keep in mind, even though birds don't show pain, this will hurt tremendously.

Joint injuries and fractures near a joint will cause more issues due to the ossification of the fracture. That means that when the bone heals, it could affect the joint and cause mobility issues. Dislocation of a joint can be reduced (replaced), but any ligament damage is unlikely to heal well. Pain medication can help with discomfort, but you'll need a prescription. DO NOT give any over the counter medications to a bird without speaking to an AVIAN veterinarian.

Body injuries:

Typically, when we are speaking of their body, most of the time we are speaking of punctures or lacerations. Hemostasis (stopping the bleeding) is the most important aspect of punctures or lacerations. Slight pressure on the wound will help form a clot. If it is flowing slow, it likely is a vein and slight pressure will allow the body to clot the area. If it is squirting, it is an artery and much heavier pressure is needed and should be brought to a veterinarian IMMEDIATELY. After the bleeding has stopped, gentle cleaning with dilute betadine or chlorhexidine and potential flushing, do not flush if it goes into the body cavity, and seeing a vet to suture the wound if it is less than 24 hours old is recommended.

Punctures or lacerations into the coelom, the body cavity, can be dangerous depending on where on the body they occur. Birds have an air sac system that goes around their entire bodies, and they will heal fairly quickly, however, if you flush into a ruptured air sac, you can drown them. If there are openings and you see the viscera, keep them moist with sterile saline and a light wrap and then bring them into a vet immediately. When wrapping anything around the body of a bird, you must take caution because if they cannot move their keel, they can't breathe and will suffocate.

Cacti spines are innocuous for the most part, and you can pull them out with a pair of hemostats. If they are on the chest or back, around the face, on the legs or wings, it should be straight forward. If it is in the coelomic space, it could take a little finesse and a better understanding of anatomy.

Wing injuries:

Simple injuries to the wing and even fractures that are closed (no bone protruding) should be wrapped until they can be evaluated at a veterinary

office. Open fractures (bone protruding) need to be kept moist with sterile saline and wrapped to preserve the health of the bone. Humerus fractures that are open can be dangerous to flush because it is a pneumatic bone (part of the respiratory system), and you can cause drowning if you are not careful. The same goes for the femur. Wrist and alular injuries should be wrapped until it is determined there is no fracture, maximum of 2 days for determination.

Blood feathers that are broken and bleeding should be grabbed at the base of the feather with hemostats and pulled out. Blood feather's blood supply primarily flows through capillary action, so it typically does not stop and needs to be pulled. If it is at the end of the feather, sometimes you can use some skin glue (super glue if you have nothing else) to help stop the bleeding.

Head injuries:

Head injuries need to be seen and monitored by a veterinarian. Minor bleeds in the brain can cause increases in cranial pressure and eventually death if not dealt with. Stress is the number one thing to avoid with head injuries. Put them in a giant hood and keep them quiet. Seizures can happen with head injuries and are sometimes unavoidable. The smaller the space and padding will help prevent further injury. DO NOT CAST them because their body temperature can rise and cause more of an injury along with a rise of intercranial pressure. Get them to a veterinarian immediately to help control seizures and try to help lower intracranial pressure. These patients typically do not do well if the injury is severe and can die days after the injury.

Crop and Tracheal Obstructions:

Choking is very rare in our birds, but it can happen. If you ever notice your bird having difficulty, get the food out of their mouth. Cast them and take hemostats to pull the food out. If something is aspirated, and completely blocking the trachea, there is not much that can be done. There is a procedure that can be done to open the airway. This is only something that should be used in the direst of circumstances and with someone who has done the procedure or understands the procedure before. It is placing a tube in a lower air sac and then getting to a veterinarian. This is the equivalent to performing a tracheotomy on a human and should only be performed if there are not any other options. At the intersection of the keel and rib, a sharp tipped tube can be inserted in this area going towards the head at the edge of the body. No more than an inch for large birds. Again, I stress this is a LAST RESORT, and you can do more damage if not done properly. I am available for contact if you would like more information on this procedure.

Crop ruptures rarely happen in our birds, but if they do happen do not stress. You can flush out the area, and they will typically heal very quickly. Feed only

tissue meat at this point until that heals, but you should get your bird evaluated by an AVIAN veterinarian to make sure that there are no other issues.

Below are some tools you should have with you:

Hemostats: a set of small, medium, and large.	Sterile Saline
Betadine or chlorhexidine	Gauze squares
Coband or vetwrap	Triple antibiotic ointment
Cast padding	Multiple syringe sizes
Hood	The number of a veterinarian

These are just some simple steps that can be taken. I recommend you have a good veterinarian you can call, and as I have repeatedly stated, an AVIAN veterinarian is important. You can go to <https://www.aav.org/> to find one near you. If you have any questions regarding anything I have discussed, please shoot me an email at dscrivener82@msn.com.

Daniel Scrivener, BS, CVT (Avian and Exotic) is a member of the Association of Avian Veterinarians, Association of Fish Veterinarians, Association of Reptile and Amphibian Veterinarians, and Association of Exotic Mammal Veterinarians as well as the North American Veterinary Technician Association and the North American Falconer's Association.

Tips and Techniques for Apprentices

A review of the On X Hunt mobile app

Falconry is the ancient art of hunting quarry with a bird of prey, but just because it is an ancient sport does not mean that we cannot benefit from modern developments. For instance, almost all of us must drive to a field to hunt but we do not think that driving "cheaps" the experience, it merely makes it possible for us to partake in the sport. Most recently the development of GPS telemetry has given us the ability to locate our birds with pinpoint accuracy in the shortest possible time. Neither of these were available to the pioneers of the sport, however I have no doubt that they would have been all about anything that would make it easier and better. One of the things that I have seen people really struggle with is finding fields, especially in new areas. Such as at a meet. The days of land navigation classes have gone to the wayside. Most people will look at you like you are speaking Greek if you give them the latitude and longitude for a location. However pretty much everyone can

navigate using Google maps. However, Google maps is only so good for us as falconers. What I have found to be invaluable to me in not just falconry, but all of my hunting endeavors is an App. called On X Hunt.

On X Hunt combines the satellite imagery of google maps with the capabilities of a hand-held GPS. You can see what an area looks like, vegetation, water, and so forth. You can drop a pin on a place you want to check out and it will navigate you to the pin. You can mark the location of your vehicle. This comes in handy if you are in thick vegetation or if something happens and you are coming out in the dark.

Now one of the coolest features in my mind is that it clearly distinguishes between private property, national forest, and state trust land. Many state trust land areas are surrounded by private property and can be difficult to find access to. With this feature you can explore your area from the comfort of your couch and locate an access point. The next cool feature is if there is not an access you can look at the private property and it will tell you who owns that piece of private property. You can then look them up and try to gain access.

Another nice thing is that you can add this tool to your arsenal without adding any additional weight to carry in the field. You can try out the app. for seven days for free. I will almost guarantee that if you try it, you will buy the thirty dollars a year subscription. Some might say that is a lot to pay for an app., but to them I would say that you would pay that much for one map of a small area to get the detail that you get on your phone plus the added benefit of an easy to use GPS.

All in all, I recommend this whole heartedly to anyone who is in the great outdoors.

~Jeremy Hough, Director, General Falconer

Preparing Your Hawk for the Field Meet ([Click here to read](#))

By Gary Brewer

Many thanks to Gary Brewer and the New York State Falconers Association for allowing us to access this article.

My adventure in South Africa

By Alex Matkins

I initially heard about Protrack, (the oldest anti-poaching company in South Africa), during my time in the Marine Corps. At the time they were offering 2-year contracts to foreigners, after completion of their training course. Contracts have since been downgraded to 3 to 6-month visa stays, with a fee to cover lodging and training expenses. I spent 3 months in South Africa with Protrack.

My adventure started upon stepping off my first propeller powered aircraft flight in the small airport of Hoedspruit. Now let's get this out of the way first, before we continue. I was not prepared for the upcoming 6 week long anti-poaching course. In fact, for some reason, I had this idea that the course would be a "fun" slightly challenging in an outdoorsy kind of a way experience. I immediately knew I had made a grave error in judgment upon seeing the camouflage clad, stern face instructors that were waiting to pick me up. The corporal looked at me with disgust and asked, "How far can you run?" They herded us (other trainees arrived via bus and other flights) onto these modified Toyota Land Cruisers that looked more like cattle trucks, with a junior instructor in the back, each armed with a semi auto rifle called a dashprod. The whole scene looked like war prisoners being loaded onto the trucks.

They dropped us off at a pub & inn, told us to get a good night sleep and a hot meal. They cruelly laughed "it will be the last one for a very long time." The next morning, they picked us up at 0600 and took us to the trainee office where they shaved our heads, read over our contracts and issued us our kit and uniforms. It was there we met our instructors and the sergeant major. A couple of the instructors were prior French foreign legionnaires. The sergeant major himself was former South African Army during the Angolan Border War.

We began our first of many pack marches to the Protrack Training Camp and arrived sometime in the evening. The camp consisted of an obstacle course, 2-man tents and 3 holes in the ground to serve as the latrines. The tents consisted of 2 metal poles with a tarp to keep the rain off our heads. A pile of sand is what we slept on for entire course, which became very comfy after a day of anti-poaching training. Each tent was assigned to a black and a white fella to avoid segregation. Our rations were definitely rations and had to last us 16 days before we could receive another one. Our rations consisted of maize meal, raw peanuts, salt, cooking oil, 2 cans of spam, 2 cans of fish, 3 packets of soup powder, juice crystals, a case of soy mince, macaroni noodles, 4 potatoes and 2 onions. We did not use soap or detergent for our mess kit, instead we used mud, sand and clean water.

Throughout the 6 weeks of training, we tracked spoor every morning. Then, if we were not doing the obstacle course, we were doing timed runs, with distances increasing over time, from 5km, 10km, 13km, 15km and finally our last one 26 kms. We also completed a 4-day survival course with nothing but our shorts and running shoes - and no food. We learned the behaviors of the big 5 game animals (elephant, lion, leopard, rhino and water buffalo) as these animal species are the leading cause of a ranger's death, other than an armed poacher. We were instructed how to use a variety of firearms. During nights at the camp the instructors would sneak in and fire a shot somewhere in the vicinity. We had to be able to identify the direction, distance, type of caliber of the gun shot, radio it in, and ambush the instructors all within 15 minutes. If one of the trainees messed up, the whole squad had to be punished.

We were taught to identify the local fauna for medical and survival uses and how to use it to conceal ourselves for ambushes. On one event we were instructed to be seated, blindfolded and our shirts were taken off. Jugs of water were constantly dumped on us.... that night was a cold one, after what seemed hours (probably less than that) were permitted to gather around a fire and were not allowed to sleep at all. The next morning, we did a 28 km hike with our packs on. I admit I was one jug away from quitting that course!

One training evening off camp in one of the parks we built a Burma, (a camp where a wall of thorny brush is built around the site to keep out hyenas and lions.) We had a fire going, and the instructors were quiet as there was mention of a pack of lions stalking our camp. I never really saw the lions, but I saw the glint of the fire reflecting from their eyes!

The course initially started with 24 trainees. We learned about the different types of poachers in South Africa. There were snare poachers laying snares all over reserves. these snares could catch anything from small birds, lions, to giraffe. Meat poachers were categorized for obvious reasons. There were also fish poachers and of course the coveted Rhino poacher. They were a highly superstitious bunch, well trained and fit, and used what's called "Moortie," otherwise known as black magic, to assist and aid in finding rhinos and avoiding capture by the anti-poacher.

We also attended a class at a local wildlife rehabilitation center. I got to see the mighty African Crowned Eagle and the Martial Eagle. There was also flock of vultures that we could hold one on a glove. I, being the only one with falconry experience was the most enthusiastic and went first, but none of them would fly to our gloves (I suspect something to do with our smell as none of us have bathed for weeks). An interesting fact about vultures is that they drool a lot!

Vultures are actually very helpful to the anti-poachers. We learned when something has been recently killed at night, by looking at the sky in the morning you can use the vultures to find it. Poachers even attempt to poison

the carcass to keep vultures from giving away the position of their kill. I also learned that even the mighty African birds of prey are victims of poachers.



The course did not get easier throughout the duration, throughout the weeks, the squad whittled down to 9 graduating. When we finally completed our final inspection and received our black berets, I was proud and highly relieved the course was over!

After my graduation, I got to see a variety of anti-poaching techniques and operations. One preserve I visited was akin to a fortified compound, filled with rhinos and white lions. The preserve was equipped with advanced cameras that see both in day and night and can detect the movement of tiny song birds. Many gated checkpoints were also complete with roving patrols of rangers.

To witness an anti-poaching operation during the daytime is rare and quite a sight. For example, if a set of unaccounted for footprints are detected, the shoe print image is messaged to every ranger in the vicinity and the hunt is on via patrol trucks. A plane is sent out to spot poachers as well, and the pilot will proceed to dive bomb the location of the poachers. Trucks loaded up with rangers proceed to leap frog and cut off routes of the poacher once the direction they are heading is established.

I was involved in detaining one poacher while working for Protrack. I also attended the autopsy of a rhino that had been poached. Sadly, her young calf died of stress and starvation 24 hours after the incident.

Alex is not currently a falconer, but has worked in Alberta, Canada doing abatement. He has flown Harris's Hawks and Gyr-Saker Falcons. He is an AFA member.



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